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THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE TAO TEH KING.

SOME time ago when venturing on the work of translating Lao-Tze's Tao Teh King,¹ I was astonished at the general agreement as to its genuineness, and quoted Professor Legge who says :

"I do not know of any other book of so ancient a date as the Tao Teh King of which the authenticity of the origin and the genuineness of the text can claim to be so well substantiated."

At that time I was not aware of the fact that Prof. Herbert A. Giles, one of the best Chinese scholars now living, had made as vigorous an onslaught on the belief in the genuineness of the Tao Teh King as the memorable Tübingen school had made on the historical character of the Gospels.

I am sorry for this oversight, for I should not have failed to mention it in the preface to my translation and should at the same time have utilised Professor Giles's critical remarks on several obscure passages in the Tao Teh King. The article appeared as far back as 1886, in the *China Review*, published at Hongkong (pp.

¹For readers not acquainted with the Chinese language and literature I have to state that no definite system of transcribing Chinese words has as yet been generally agreed upon. Though the abolition of this anarchical state is a consummation devoutly to be wished, it seems all but impossible, were it alone for the reason that the Chinese pronunciation itself is by no means uniform. Thus the word 經 (i. e., a classical or canonical book) is pronounced in the Peking dialect *ching*, and in Canton *king*. Further, 子 (philosopher) is sometimes transcribed *Tzu*, sometimes *Tze*, sometimes *Tzö*, sometimes *Tz'*, all of which are intended for the same sound, an abruptly pronounced short *u* as in "but." For the sake of leaving quotations in their original form, it was impossible to be strictly consistent, but the thoughtful reader will find no difficulty in identifying the proper words and names.

231-280), and is very little referred to by sinologists and still less advertised by the publishers. Only of late, since the learned author came more prominently before the public, have his views on Lao-Tze been mentioned more frequently. Professor Legge, whose translation of the Tao Teh King in the *Sacred Books of the East* appeared in 1891, does not take the slightest notice of Professor Giles; neither does Victor von Strauss, nor any other of the later translators. The Rev. Dr. P. J. MacLagan, whose translation appeared about two years ago in the *China Review*, ignores Professor Giles's attack on the authenticity of the Tao Teh King.¹ Mr. T. W. Kingsmill's translation alone is based upon Professor Giles's theory. These facts are not quoted to extenuate but merely to explain my oversight. The main question, however, remains, whether or not Professor Giles is justified in his assumption when he says:

"The work in question is beyond all doubt a forgery. It contains indeed much that Lao-Tzu did say, but more that he did not. What he did say, as found therein, has been mostly mistranslated. The meaning of what he did not say, if meaning there be, may be safely relegated to the category of things unknown."

Professor Giles restates his position most forcibly in his recent book, *A History of Chinese Literature*, and adds:

"A dwindling minority still believes that we possess that book in the well-known Tao Teh King" (p. 57).

In a private letter to the author of this article Professor Giles formulates his view in a somewhat milder form, making clear the main point of his contention, saying:

"The work we possess does contain many of Lao-Tzu's actual utterances. I only contend that these were handed down by tradition to such writers as Chuang-Tzu, at whose date no 'book' was in existence."

Professor Giles is a great authority in matters sinological, and I confess from the start that my knowledge of Chinese literature is necessarily limited and cannot compare with the mass of material which he has at his command. Accordingly I approached the sub-

¹ Dr. MacLagan's translation is published in Vol. XXIII. of the *China Review*. Mr. T. W. Kingsmill's translation appears in Vol. XXIV., Nos. 3 and 4.

ject with the preconceived idea that I should have to recast my views of the Tao Teh King, and I gave a very careful perusal to the mooted article on "The Remains of Lao-Tzu"; but after a rigorous consideration of all arguments offered against the authenticity of the book, I have come to the conclusion that—barring corruptions of the text and additions that have slipped in through the carelessness of copyists—the bulk of the book must after all be regarded as genuine.

The question is sufficiently important to deserve further investigation. It acquires an additional interest by affording a parallel to the history of the New Testament criticism, which (as it appears at present) at the outset overshot the mark and put the age of the Gospels much too late. In the same way the first critical scholars of the Old Testament relegated the bulk of the Hebrew books, the subjects of their composition as well as their authenticity to the realm of fable. We have learned now that, although the final redaction of the several biblical books may be late, the bulk of their contents is genuine and ancient, establishing the fact that tradition is much more reliable than has commonly been assumed. There is a strong conservatism in the early productions of man's literary aspirations, the tenaciousness of which can hardly be appreciated by modern writers. This conviction has again been brought home to me by a reconsideration of the authenticity of Lao-Tze's Tao Teh King.¹

¹ The present state of New Testament criticism, most concisely summed up in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, s. v. "Gospels," and quite exhaustively and authoritatively treated in Prof. H. J. Holtzmann's works on the New Testament, his *Handcommentar*, and his *Lehrbuch der N. T. Theol.* (2 vols.) takes a very decided stand upon the historical reliability of the main facts told in the Gospels. It is assumed that Mark, Matthew, and Luke have drawn from an original Gospel, now lost, of which Mark is the most faithful and oldest reproduction. The words in common to the three synoptic Gospels would fairly represent this primitive source, which is commonly called by German scholars *Ur-Markus*, i. e., original Mark. Further, the spade of excavators has revealed to us that though the Old Testament may have been compiled at a late date, it nevertheless contains traditions which are older than the most confident assertions of the old-fashioned orthodox theology dared to believe. In fact, some of them being older than the date of Moses, the venerable hoariness of the Old Testament legends, while superseding the preposterous assumptions of the first critics, is of little avail for propping up

But let us investigate Professor Giles's arguments. They are partly negative, partly positive. The former are based on the fact that Confucius, Tso-ch'iu Ming, and Mencius never alluded either to Lao-Tze or to his book. The argument proves nothing. Nor is the statement as it stands quite correct. There is an allusion, not to Lao-Tze's Tao Teh King, but to his doctrine of requiting hatred with goodness. Lao-Tze's name is no more mentioned in the mooted passage than is that of Confucius in the various references to Confucian doctrines in the Tao Teh King.

The passage occurs in the *Lun Yü* and reads as follows :

或曰 報怨以德何如 子曰 以德報怨 何以報德 以直報怨 以德報德

"Some one said, 'Requite hatred with goodness,' what do you think?"

"The sage replied: 'If with goodness hatred be requited, how then should goodness be requited? [I say:] With justice [viz., just retaliation] requite hatred, and goodness with goodness.'"

Confucius did not grasp the significance of Lao-Tze's ethics, and his reluctance in mentioning the name of his great rival was as natural as it was reciprocated.

We might as well say that the literary work of Confucius was a myth, because Lao-Tze, who may be assumed to have written the Tao Teh King at a highly advanced age, does not mention his famous rival; or, to use a more modern simile, that Darwin's book on *The Descent of Man* must have been a product of the latter part of the nineteenth century, because neither he nor his book had been mentioned by any of the divines of his time in their published sermons or any other of their writings. The negative arguments of Professor Giles are offset by the fact that Lao-Tze is mentioned by Lieh Yü-K'ow, commonly called Lieh-Tze, who lived in the fifth century B. C., by Chuang Chou, commonly called Chuang-Tze, who lived in the fourth century B. C., by Han Fei Tze,¹ either of the fourth or third century B. C., and in addition by Liu Ngan,

the antiquated dogmatical conception of the Bible. It proves too much; but if it proves anything, it proves the tenacity of religious tradition. We, the children of an unsettled age, can scarcely form an adequate opinion as to the extraordinary conservatism of primitive mankind.

¹ Although Han Fei Tze's philosophy was "tinctured by the quietist doctrines of Lao Tze," he can scarcely be said to belong to the Taoist school; while Hsün

king of Hwai Nan, a grandson of the founder of the Han dynasty, commonly known as Huai Nan Tze of the second century. All these ancient authors indulge in literal or almost literal quotations from Lao-Tze, whom they venerate as a master of highest authority. Professor Legge¹ says :

"To show how numerous the quotations by Han Fei and Liü An² are, let it be borne in mind that the Tao Teh King has come down to us as divided into eighty-one short chapters; and that the whole of it is shorter than the shortest of our Gospels. Of the eighty-one chapters, either the whole or portions of seventy-one are found in those two writers. There are other authors not so decidedly Taoistic, in whom we find quotations from the little book. These quotations are in general wonderfully correct. Various readings indeed there are; but if we were sure that the writers did trust to memory, their differences would only prove that copies of the text had been multiplied from the very first."

Taoism had been the religion of China since time immemorial, and Lao-Tze's Taoism came into great prominence under the Han dynasty, which began to rule in 206 B. C. The Emperor Ching who ruled 156-143 B. C. issued a decree by which Lao-Tze's book on *tao* and *teh* was raised to the rank of canonical authority; hence its name Tao Teh King.

The quotations from Lao-Tze, the genuineness of which is freely conceded by Professor Giles, date back to the fourth, third, and second century B. C. Accordingly the sentiments are unequivocally antique Chinese thoughts, which fact is sufficient to insure forever the importance of the Tao Teh King as a document of the religious evolution of mankind, rendering the obvious parallelism to Buddhist and Christian sentiments the more remarkable as its growth must be acknowledged to have taken place in perfect independence. Now it would seem that the more frequent and the more scattered these quotations are, the more assured would be the authenticity of the Tao Teh King. Considering the literary

Tze, whom Professor Giles also classes among the Taoists (*China Review*, p. 231), if he belongs to any school, must be regarded as a Confucianist. (See Mayer's *Chinese Reader's Manual*, No. 149 and 649.)

¹ *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXXIX., p. 6, Introduction to his translation of the Tao Teh King.

² Viz., Liu Ngan.

laxity of the ancient Chinese authors, it is remarkable how correct and exact the numerous quotations from Lao-Tze are! Their close agreement not only with the present text of the Tao Teh King but also with one another could not very well be explained from oral tradition.

Take for instance chapter 58, which contains no specially noteworthy sayings of Lao-Tze. The first and second sentences are quoted by Huai Nan Tze; the third one (though modified) by Han Fei Tze; farther down there are characters cited by Chuang Tze and Han Fei Tze. Professor Giles sums up the result by saying:

"With the exception of a few inserted characters, the chapter can be entirely constructed out of quotations to be found in the various writers already cited."

This is a strong argument in favor of the authenticity of the Tao Teh King, but Professor Giles seems to think, on the contrary, that these quotations are the material from which some literary imposter has compiled the present Tao Teh King. Now, I venture to say that, from Professor Giles's standpoint, and assuming these quotations to be genuine, the *pia fraus* of this Taoist "artificer" should be called rather a reconstruction than a forgery, and we ought to confess that the work was cleverly done. However, if these quotations are fictitious, we must be astonished at their close agreement, and we would have no standard at all by which we could decide what is genuine and what not. In fact, we might as well declare that Lao-Tze himself is an invention of Han Fei Tze, Chuang-Tze, or perhaps Hwai Nan Tze.

Such indeed is the position of one who follows in the wake of Professor Giles.

Why not advance one step farther and declare the whole ancient literature of China a modern forgery fabricated for the purpose of palliating the atrocities of the Boxers by imputing to the Chinese the semblance of an ancient civilisation and a sublime code of morals?

Professor Giles's position is out-Giles-ed by Mr. Thos. W. Kingsmill in the *China Review* (Vol. XXIII., No. 5), where the latter takes occasion to castigate Dr. Maclagan for translating the Tao Teh King without referring to Professor Giles's essay on the

Remains of Lao-Tze. Mr. Kingsmill caps the climax by denying the existence of Lao-Tze, and his argument is plausible enough for any one who knows but little of early Chinese literature. He says:

"Hwai Nan Tsze and the other philosophers of his school were in the habit of quoting certain saws of unknown origin, premising them with the phrase 老子曰 'the old masters said.' In the prevailing fusion 老子 grew into a personality, the Philosopher Lao. So an individual had to be found, and as in the other case, the new generation of writers, under the stimulating rewards of the new regime, were nothing loth. We see the process going on in Sze-Ma-Ts'ien's time. The historian tells us indeed of a Philosopher Lao but is very careful to precede the statement with the very doubtful phrase 或曰 'huo yüeh, 'it is said,' where, however, the character 'huo implies a very much stronger sense of disbelief than the English expression. So in a succeeding generation, all that was necessary to do was to gather together all the sayings heralded by the remark 'the old masters said,' jumble them together without rhyme or reason, and add a few inane remarks of the compiler's own, and issue them to the world as the genuine remains of the philosopher Lao-Tsze.

"Such is the origin of that paltry juggle, known to succeeding ages of uncritical writers as the Tao Teh King."

The greater part of the ancient literature of China is condemned by Mr. Kingsmill as forgeries. Here is Mr. Kingsmill's view in his own words:

"China had been gradually trying to evolve, out of her primitive writing, something that could be looked upon as literature and the stimulus came from India, and is very apparent in the burst of philosophic works which marked the period, Chwang-Tsze, as we have him now, Hwai Nan Tze, Sun Tze, etc. To this period we owe the recension, partly from oral tradition, and partly from the remains of the old tablets, which were unintelligible without the oral key of the old records and poetry, and we are sorry to say bribed by the rewards of a vast amount of barefaced forgeries.

"Many of these works, it is true, contain valuable fragments of the old traditions, though largely padded and diluted with more modern accretions. Of these the *Yih King* is a good specimen. Certain of the books in the collection known as the *Shü King* are of this nature. . . . The Tao Teh King partakes also of the same nature. Professor Giles (*l. c.*) has pointed out seriatim the sources of its inspirations, which are to be found in the works of Hwai Nan Tsze and others. There is however this distinction; the authors of the recensions did not seek to deceive, their only intention was to make the text so far as they could intelligible; literature was in its infancy and quotation marks and dependent sentences and the devices of later writers had not been invented. The forger, for forger he must be

called, of the Tao Teh King had no such excuse. It was profitable in those days to unearth any fragment of the old literature; so he plagiarised Chwang Tze and Hwai Nan Tsze and added an ignorant padding, both the patter of the juggler, to conceal the indifferent joinings, and uttered the composition to a credulous age as the genuine production of Lao-Tze, (this time with a capital initial).

"I have used this strong language in no carping nor ungenerous spirit; but believing, as I do, that we have not learned all that is possible from the study of ancient Chinese, it has been a source of regret that those who have the time and the opportunity to search for themselves, have been content to follow in the old tracks."

Mr. Kingsmill claims that "both the form and the doctrines" of the Tao Teh King are Indian. He identifies "the great Tao" with the Sanskrit *marga*, the eightfold noble Path; the *wu wei* 無爲 or not-doing with Nirvâna; 功成 *kung ch'eng*, i. e., merit completed, with Karma; and 欲 *yü*, i. e., desire, with *trishna*, thirst.¹ He goes so far as to identify the three *gunas* with *teh* (virtue) as goodness (*sattva*), *yü* (desire) as passion or activity (*rajas*) and 淡 *tan* (paleness) which he transcribes *tam*, and calls it "a word imported for the occasion" (!) with "darkness or inertia (*tamas*). The word 樸 *p'u*, simplicity, in chapter 28 means to him "Bhagavat" (p. 154), and 迷 *mi*, "confusion," in chapter 58 is transcribed "*me*, old *mai*," and declared to be "a transliteration of Indian *mâyâ*, illusion" (p. 190).

All this is partly far-fetched, partly positively untrue. The Taoist's Tao is a world-principle, not as the Buddhist *marga* a moral endeavor. There is no similarity except that one of the meanings of the word Tao happens to be "path." It is used by the Buddhists to translate "path," and by the Christians to translate "word" or *logos*. Lao-Tze's term *wu wei* (not doing) is a rule of conduct while the Buddhist Nirvâna is the transcendent state of bliss attained by the Buddha. In the language of the Buddhist missionaries it takes the place of the Christian heaven. The difference between *kung ch'eng* (merit completed) and the Buddhist

¹ The character *chi*, i. e., "subtle, hidden" on p. 149 first line in Mr. Kingsmill's article is obviously a misprint. It is probably meant for 氣 *ch'i* "breath," or "the primeval life-principle," which latter, however, ought not to be translated by "primeval matter."

Karma is almost tantamount to the contrast between "virtue" and "sin."

The identification of *teh*, *yü*, and *tan* with the three *gunas*, or qualities, viz., good, bad and indifferent is as purely imaginary as that of "simplicity" with "Bhagavat," and possesses not even a semblance of truth. Further, it is difficult to understand how Mr. Kingsmill will prove that *tan* was pronounced *tam*, that the word was imported from India, or even that it ever had the meaning "darkness or inertia," let alone badness in the sense of *tamas*, as used in India.

Although the quotations of ancient Chinese authors from the Tao Teh King date back to the fourth, third, and second century, Mr. Kingsmill feels compelled by his theory not to allow its composition to have taken place before the intercourse between China and India was established under the Han dynasty, which means the first century of the Christian era.¹

Mr. Kingsmill's "literal translation" of the Tao Teh King seems to have been made from an edition with many variants which differ considerably from all the traditional texts at my command. In addition he alters the text whenever it pleases him.² It reads sometimes as if it were written in the grim humor of Mark Twain when translating a translation of one of his funny stories back into English. No wonder that Mr. Kingsmill calls the Tao Teh King a "paltry juggle."

Mr. Kingsmill allows that the book contains in the "rhyming proverbs enough survivals of some older period," but the quotations which breathe the Buddhist-Christian spirit, such sayings as "requite hatred with goodness" are unequivocally ancient and date back centuries before there was any intercourse with India.

The Han dynasty favored Taoism from the start (viz., 208 B. C.), in grateful remembrance of the aid which Liu Pang, its

¹ The Han dynasty reigned from 201 B. C. till 190 A. D., and the first Buddhist missionaries reached China in the eighth year of Ming Ti, corresponding to 66 A. D.

² For instance, in Chapter 6 he reads the "spirit of desire" instead of "the spirit of the valley."

founder, had received from Chang Liang the Taoist. Accordingly there is not the slightest foundation in Mr. Kingsmill's assertion (p. 195-196) that "to attempt an open contest" with the Confucianist scholars of those days "was as hopeless as to question the dictates of the Church in the heydays of the Holy Office," and that "the only hope of success lay in an appeal to the writings of antiquity" which was accomplished by the forgery of the Tao Teh King.

Although I am willing enough to accept all reasonable propositions of any advanced school of Chinese Higher Criticism, I am not sufficiently convinced either by Professor Giles or by Mr. Kingsmill to leave "the old tracks." I see too many objections and contradictions in their views.

It seems to me that if the Tao Teh King were the pious fraud of a later Taoist, it would contain at least some of the aberrations of Taoism and above all a demonstration of the claim that the great master believed in the possibility of preparing an elixir of life, which was the fad of almost all later disciples of Lao-Tze. All religious forgeries have a dogmatic tendency or some other practical purpose, and the absence of any dogmatic tendency in the Tao Teh King renders the assumptions of both Professor Giles and Mr. Kingsmill very improbable.

Mr. Kingsmill goes so far in his assertion that his views need not be taken seriously, while Professor Giles's more moderate position deserves attention, were it merely on account of his high standing as a sinologist.

Professor Giles grants that the quotations made by Huai Nan Tze and Han Fei Tze are genuine and treats these authors as the only reliable source of our knowledge of Lao-Tze. He says:

"Han Fei Tzu, of the third century B. C., quotes many sayings of Lao Tzu, which are found in the Tao Teh King. That is, they are meant for the same; but the wording is different. Many of Han Fei Tzu's quotations, however, make

¹ Deuteronomy, perhaps the boldest and cleverest forgery in the history of religion, was composed for the purpose of establishing the monopoly of the temple of Jerusalem, while its dogmatic tendency is to establish the rigid monotheism of the prophets.

sense where the corresponding sentences in the Tao Teh King make nonsense. Han Fei Tzu also gives quotations which are nowhere to be found in the Tao Teh King. Twice he mentions 'a book.' Without descending to special pleading, this may well have been some book dealing with the teachings of Lao Tzu. . . .

"Of Huai Nan Tzu, who lived in the second century B. C., the same may be said, except that he never mentions a book."

Lao-Tze's Tao Teh King begins:

道可道非常道

"The way which can be walked is not the eternal way."

This sentence is quoted by both Han Fei Tze and Huai Nan Tze, but the former with a slight variant, adding the untranslatable particle 之 *chi* after *tao*, and the latter rendering the quotation more complete by adding the next following sentence, "The name which can be uttered is not the eternal name;" but both introduce the quotation by 老子曰 *Lao Tze yueh*, "Lao Tze says," not "Lao Tze writes," or "as is written in Lao Tze's book."

Professor Giles is very apodictic. We might as well say that many sayings which have a deep sense in the Tao Teh King are purely trivial when read in the sense in which they are quoted by Han Fei Tze and Huai Nan Tze. The editor of the *China Review* adds a comment to Professor Giles's article in which he says:

"Mr. Giles will pardon us for expressing our conviction that, in spite of all he has brought forward, there is still room to believe that Lao Tzu, or the set of men typically represented by the term Lao Tzu, differed from men of the Han Fei Tzu type as much as heaven differs from earth."

In addition to the quotations which are contained in our present version of the Tao Teh King, there are other quotations which are not found in it. Mr. Giles makes much of it. He says:

"If it [viz., 'the book' mentioned by Han Fei Tzu] must be the Tao Tê Ching at all costs, then we are upon the horn of a dilemma,—it contained sayings of Lao Tzu which are not in the modern Tao Tê Ching."

Professor Giles assumes that some genuine sayings of Lao-Tze were preserved by oral tradition which in itself is by no means improbable, although the reliability of such a mode of tradition could be admitted only for an illiterate age and must in a literary age fairly be regarded as doubtful. But considering the prominence

of Lao-Tze, we may very well assume that in addition to his genuine literary remains, there ought to have been in vogue a number of apocryphal sayings of his. We know that in the history of Christianity, in addition to the canonical and apocryphal gospels, there existed the so-called *ἀγραφα*, the unwritten words of the Lord which were frequently quoted by the church-fathers; but no New Testament critic has ever thought of proving the Gospels to be a forgery by a reference to unverifiable quotations of the sayings of Christ. The apocryphal and agraphal sayings of Lao-Tze are by no means as numerous as those of Jesus, and if we are not misinformed, they are less frequent than a reader of Professor Giles's article is apt to think.

In reply to another argument of Professor Giles we may say that there are words in the New Testament which cannot be found in Greek dictionaries (for instance the expression *ἐπιούσιος*), but the fact cannot be brought forward against the authenticity of the Gospels. Thus it is quite possible that the compilers of 說文 *Shuo Wên* believed they had embodied all Chinese words in use at or about the time of the Christian era and might after all have omitted a character that belonged to the sixth century B. C.

Professor Giles says:

"Other sayings which occur in the Tao Tê Ching as utterances of Lao Tzu, are stated by Chuang Tzu to have fallen from the lips of the Yellow Emperor (B. C. 2697)."

Obviously Professor Giles here refers to such sentences as "one who knows does not talk; one who talks does not know" (Chap. 56), and the curious quotation of the sixth chapter of our Tao Teh King which (as says the commentator T'u T'au Kien) Lieh Tze attributes to the mythical Huang Tî, the Yellow Emperor.¹ But considering the fact that the Tao Teh King is full of quotations, why could not Lao-Tze have quoted this passage from a book which popular tradition attributed to Huang Tî? Professor Giles's argument has no force.

Further, Professor Giles contends that such a book as the

¹ Also to chapter 38, the text of which, however, is doubtful

modern Tao Teh King was never written by Lao-Tze, and that it did not exist at the time of these writers. He grants that Han Fei Tze twice mentioned a book of some kind, but "Chuang Tzu, the greatest Taoist writer of all ages, who flourished in the fourth century B. C., never alludes to any book from the hand of Lao Tzu."

By the same logic we might easily prove that the Epistles of Paul or the original Mark cannot have existed in the first century of the Christian era, simply because some of those authors who quote from these writings do not expressly mention the fact that their quotations were taken from epistles or refer to them in vague and general terms.

Sze-Ma Ch'ien, the Chinese Herodotus, assuredly no mean authority, who lived from about 163-85 B. C., mentions the book as saying that it had two parts, discussed the *tao* and the *teh*, and consisted of five thousand and some words—statements which are exact as can be.

Professor Giles objects to the testimony of Sze-Ma Ch'ien. He says:

"In his brief memoir of Lao Tzu he mentions 'a book in 5,000 and odd characters'; but he mentions it in such a way as to make it clear beyond all doubt that he himself had never set eyes upon the work, to say nothing of a somewhat supernatural hue with which the rest of his account is tinged."

Here is the Sze-Ma Ch'ien's account of Lao-Tze's life:

"Lao-Tze was born in the hamlet Ch'ü-Jhren, Li-Hsiang, K'u-Hien, of Ch'u. His family was the Li gentry. His proper name was Er, his posthumous title Po-Yang, his appellation Tan. In Cho he was in charge of the secret archives as state historian.

"Confucius went to Cho in order to consult Lao-Tze on the rules of propriety.

"[When Confucius, speaking of propriety, praised reverence for the sages of antiquity], Lao-Tze said: 'The men of whom you speak, Sir, have, if you please, together with their bones mouldered. Their words alone are still extant. If a noble man finds his time he rises, but if he does not find his time he drifts like a roving-plant and wanders about. I observe that the wise merchant hides his treasures deeply as if he were poor. The noble man of perfect virtue assumes an attitude as though he were stupid. Let go, Sir, your proud airs, your many wishes, your affectation and exaggerated plans. All this is of no use to you, Sir. That is what I have to communicate to you, and that is all.'

"Confucius left. [Unable to understand the basic idea of Lao-Tze's ethics].

he addressed his disciples, saying: 'I know that the birds can fly, I know that the fishes can swim, I know that the wild animals can run. For the running, one could make nooses; for the swimming, one could make nets; for the flying, one could make arrows. As to the dragon I cannot know how he can bestride wind and clouds when he heavenwards rises. To-day I saw Lao-Tze. Is he perhaps like the dragon?'

"Lao-Tze practised reason and virtue. His doctrine aims in self-concealment and namelessness.

"Lao-Tze resided in Cho most of his life. When he foresaw the decay of Cho, he departed and came to the frontier. The custom-house officer Yin-Hi said: Sir, since it pleases you to retire, I request you for my sake to write a book.'

"Thereupon Lao-Tze wrote a book of two parts consisting of five thousand and odd words, in which he discussed the concepts of reason and virtue. Then he departed.

"No one knows where he died."

Sze-Ma Ch'ien is an historian, author of the *Shi Ki*, i. e., Historical Records, the first Chinese book that can truly be called History. It may be granted there is scope for doubt whether the interview of Lao-Tze and Confucius is historical; in itself it is by no means impossible. The account which Chuang-Tze gives of Confucius's visit to Lao-Tze at Cho is commonly regarded as a romance, but Sze-Ma Ch'ien's report is too sober to treat it in the same way. I am at a loss how Professor Giles can say that Sze-Ma Ch'ien mentions Lao-Tze's book on the Tao and the Teh "in such a way as to make it clear beyond all doubt that he himself had never set eyes upon the work, to say nothing of a somewhat supernatural hue with which the rest of his account is tinged." If there is a supernatural hue in Sze-Ma Ch'ien's account of Lao-Tze's life, I have been unable to discover it.

The account of the interview between Lao-Tze and Confucius gains in credibility if we consider the fact that Sze-Ma Ch'ien was a Confucian and not a follower of Lao-Tze.¹

There is one difficulty only in Sze-Ma Ch'ien's account. He is unaware of the fact that about half a century before Emperor Ching had raised the dignity of Lao-Tze's book to that of a *King*, i. e., a

¹ Stated by Mr. Suzuki, in his article "Lao-Tze and Professor Giles" in the present number of *The Monist*, p. 612.

canonical writing. But are we justified in assuming that Sze-Ma Ch'ien, although a scholar and a historian, was omniscient? After all he was not a historian in the modern connotation of the word, but the path-finder of historiography who had to battle with all the difficulties of primitive conditions and the limitations of his age. In my opinion, it lies quite within the scope of probability that the copy of Lao-Tze's book in Sze-Ma Ch'ien's possession had been written before the issue of the decree of its canonisation or at least before it became generally known. We must remember that the art of printing had not as yet been invented and books were precious and rare.

Professor Giles makes up for the lack of force of his argument by stating his position most forcibly. He says:

"Had this book been in existence at the date at which Ssu-ma Ch'ien wrote his immortal history, it is difficult to believe that such a man would not have made some effort to see it."

The same argument which is merely an assertion vigorously and positively stated, is repeated further down:

"Ssu-ma Ch'ien, the historian, who wrote about a century before Christ, mentions a work attributed to Lao Tzu. He never saw it himself; but we may rest assured that he would have done so had it been in existence at the time at which he lived."

It seems to me that a man like Sze-Ma Ch'ien, being apparently greatly interested in the philosophy of Lao-Tze, would indeed "have made some efforts to see it"; and if he had not been able to find it, would surely have expressed regret about it. The statement which tallies exactly with the size, contents, and title of the book in our possession now, implies plainly that he knew it. The book in our possession contains passages quoted by Han Fei Tze, Chuang Tze, and other authors. Yet says Professor Giles, at Chuang Tze's "date 'no book' was in existence."

With all deference to Professor Giles's superior sinological scholarship, I fail to be convinced by his arguments; and unless he advances other and stronger reasons I shall still continue *in petto* to hold the traditional view that the Tao Teh King which

we have now is substantially the book which, Sze-Ma Ch'ien says, Lao-Tze has written.

Professor Giles's attitude on the question of the authenticity of Lao-Tze is perhaps characteristic of his natural inclination (which in many respects is very commendable) never to be lukewarm, to be either hot or cold, and to express himself vigorously. Even Mr. George T. Candlin in his review, while singing the praises of the great sinologist exhausts the whole gamut of eulogy, says : "that he may be oracular, dogmatic, pugnacious to a degree, scant of courtesy sometimes to opponents, but never dull." I agree with Mr. Candlin's praise of Professor Giles, especially also with the comment as to his lack of dullness which sometimes implies that he exaggerates and carries his contention too far.¹

A negative view is nowadays so much credited with being the more critical and more scientific conception that it almost seems as though an affirmative position ought to be based upon some interest which its holder has at stake. But I have no axe to grind. I am no Taoist priest and am utterly indifferent as to whether or not the authenticity of the Taoist canon can be upheld. My interest in the Tao Teh King is for the sake of the ideas it contains, and I do not care whether Lao-Tze, the old philosopher Er of the Li family, composed it, embodying in his collection of aphorisms older proverbs and sayings, or whether it be the product of an oral tra-

¹ Though Professor Giles is acknowledged to be one of the foremost sinologues in the world, his dictionary in spite of its great preferences over other dictionaries is not without flaws. The *China Review* presented its readers in every consecutive number with emendations by E. H. Parker and E. von Zach. The former takes a special delight in carping at the prominent lexicographer, prefacing his comments in a Boxer-like cruel humor as follows (*China Review*, XXXIII., No. 1, p. 48) :

"Giles's Dictionary affords endless sport to the merry, and we may look forward to many a long year of sparring yet. I find it quite a mental relief, after the serious studies of the day, to indulge in a little Giles-baiting. It is all the more agreeable, in that I know it can never do any harm : in pachydermatousness Mr. Giles would give points to a hippopotamus, if not indeed to a rhinoceros ; and there is not more danger of my fine shafts wounding his grizzly hide than there is of a *dum-dum* bullet piercing the latter pachyderm's skin."

Professor Giles also seems bent on making his dictionary a means for propagating his favorite doctrines. He actually inserts his views concerning the Tao Teh King under the word *Tao*.

dition, composed after the time of the burning of the books (212 B. C.), although it would seem strange that, as was actually the case, several copies should have been rediscovered. On the assumption that the book is a forgery one would think that merely one copy should have been found.

After all Professor Giles concedes that most of the pithy sayings which render the Tao Teh King so attractive are genuine utterances of Lao-Tze, and the main thing, it seems to me, is the contents of the book and its spirit, not the authenticity of the edition that now lies before us. At any rate, the antiquity of these remarkable utterances, even if their compilation in book-form were of a later date, is unequivocally assured.

It is true that the Tao Teh King in its present shape is not a logically arranged presentation of a doctrine but a jumble of incoherent remarks, a collection of aphorisms. But this neglected exterior of stylistic composition harbors gems of deepest wisdom and enables us to discern back of it a thinker of deep philosophical insight. It seems to me that if the book were the product of an imposter, the result would have been very different: the make-up would have been elegant, the style correct and clear, but the contents, poor in spirit, sectarian in tendency, and paltry in its contentions. Tradition tells us that Lao-Tze wrote his book as an old man, broken down with age and filled with gloomy anticipations as to the future of his country. He had retired from the field of his activity in the state of Cho, and was about to leave the country in a state of dejection. Accordingly Lao-Tze can no longer have been himself; he must have been like a noble ruin still reflecting the grandeur of former days.

If the Tao Teh King is a fraud, its compiler must have been an unrivalled psychologist, for the book before us bears all the vestiges of the faults that old age is heir to. The author cares not for logical connexion, but he brings out plainly the burden of his message to the world. He repeats himself, he quotes proverbs and wise saws as they happen to suggest themselves, and thus, while the composition is loose and careless, the whole is after all impressive.

Supposing the book to be genuine and the tradition about its being written at the very end of its author's career true, we can understand Lao-Tze's indignation at the ostentatious self-sufficiency of Chinese ceremonialism which seems to have been rampant from time immemorial even before Confucius made himself its apostle. It is natural for a man like Lao-Tze not to mention Confucius by name; in fact, he never mentions names, although his book is full of quotations. But he vents his feelings in unmistakable allusions about ceremonialism and the external show of virtue. It is scarcely probable that an imposter would have been so cunning as to speak in mere allusions. Imposters, as a rule, show unmistakably the purpose for which a book is forged. They want to use the authority of their master for an endorsement of their favorite views; and a pious Taoist would not have allowed an opportunity to slip without plainly denouncing Confucianism. Should we assume that he was artful enough to imitate a senile disregard of diction and oracular allusions to the dangers of growing Confucianism? We deem it highly improbable.

If the Tao Teh King had been compiled in the way Professor Giles suggests, from the authors who quoted sayings of Lao-Tze, the artificer of the book would certainly have tried to make the book complete and would not have omitted a number of the quotations which were just as accessible to him as the material which he is supposed to have incorporated in the Tao Teh King. On the other hand, it is likely that he would not have inserted quotations from the Yellow Emperor and other sources.

I agree with Professor Giles that the text of the Tao Teh King must be regarded as corrupt or doubtful in many passages, and it seems to me that most of the corruptions arise from the fact that the book was written by an old man under aggravating circumstances. The man who wrote it was great, but when he wrote it he was not in a condition to appear to advantage before literary critics. The agitation of his mind becomes apparent in the lack of logical cohesion, which became the source of doubts and suggestions for commentators and a cause of errors for copyists.

Professor Giles says :

"Truly we may say of every passage in Chinese literature, *Quot homines, tot sententiæ*; and the worst of it is that the outside public becomes daily more convinced that the Chinese is an ambiguous language, which is, as nearly as possible, in diametrical opposition to the truth."

I for one belong to that class of people who believe that the Chinese language offers more opportunities for vagueness than any other language known to me; and I envy Professor Giles the assurance with which he offers his translations as unequivocally correct. If I only could persuade myself to accept them without misgivings!

It is pleasant to deal with people who are outspoken, for they are definite in their opinions, and the directness with which they propound their arguments saves time. It is sometimes difficult to find out what those others mean who, though they have very decided views, neither affirm nor deny, thus leaving their readers in a quandary. Professor Giles, I am happy to say, belongs to the former class, but he might be positive without being severe on those who differ from him.

The Chinese language is a Chinese puzzle, and the Tao Teh King is more so than any other book or classic, except the Yih King. Therefore sinologues have good reason to be charitable with one another.

The slovenliness of Lao-Tze's style was the natural cause of the various text-corruptions which have crept in through careless copyists, but are by no means as numerous or as hopeless as Professor Giles would make us believe. Frequently his lack of patience induces Professor Giles to reject a sentence unnecessarily. For instance, speaking of chapter 8, he says:

"Either Lao Tzu wrote unqualified nonsense, or he did not write that. In the former case, I think we should have heard less about him as one of the great early teachers of humanity."

We translate the chapter, which Professor Giles condemns as unqualified nonsense, as follows:

"Superior goodness resembleth water. Water in goodness benefiteth the ten thousand things, yet it quarreleth not. Because it dwelleth in places which the

multitude of men shun [seeking a position of lowliness], therefore it is near unto the eternal Reason.

"For a dwelling goodness chooses the level. For a heart goodness chooses commotion. When giving, goodness chooses benevolence. In words, goodness chooses faith. In government goodness chooses order. In business goodness chooses ability. In its motion goodness chooses timeliness. It quarreleth not. Therefore it is not rebuked.

Of chapter 11, Professor Giles says:

"This chapter is beneath contempt. It is an illustration of the advantage of that which is non-existent; e. g., of the potentiality of ingress and egress by a window or a door, in consequence of the absence of any resisting medium. It does not bear traces of the master's hand."

Professor Giles does not seem to be familiar with the fact that Western philosophers, too, have been troubled with the problem of form. We cannot comprehend the world from matter and motion alone, from the material of which things consist, but there is another element to be considered which has so little to do with substance of any kind that it evinces its efficiency by an absence of substance, thus justifying the old Eleatic paradox, that the part may be more than the whole. We translate chapter 11 as follows:

"Thirty spokes unite in one nave, and on that which is non-existent [on the hole in the nave] depends the wheel's utility. Clay is moulded into a vessel, and on that which is non-existent [on its hollowness] depends the vessel's utility. By cutting out doors and windows we build a house, and on that which is non-existent [on the empty space] depends the house's utility.

"Therefore, when the existence of things is profitable, it is the non-existent in them which renders them useful."

The most prominent moral maxim of Lao-Tze is expressed in his doctrine of 無爲 *wu wei*, which literally means "non-action," or "not-doing." The context of the many aphoristic sayings of the Tao Teh King makes it plain what Lao-Tze means by saying, "He who makes mars" (see chapters 29 and 64). To make (*wei*) means artful interference and an unnatural assertion of our own unwarranted conceits or pretensions. The "not-doing," accordingly, is the abstinence of all this and a *laissez-faire* of the natural course of things.

Non-action is as important in life, as non-existence in things existing. As by carving out, or by taking away, we can give form to anything, so by doing the not-doing there is nothing that cannot be done. Says Lao-Tze :

無爲而無不爲

"By not-doing there is nothing that cannot be done."

Professor Giles is presumably far from denying this interpretation of Lao-Tze's *wu wei*; at any rate, he quotes Lao-Tze's saying as genuine (chapter 43):

"And so I know that there is advantage in non-action."

This sentence is quoted by Huai Nan Tze as the moral to the following parable :

"Light asked Nothing if it really existed or not. Nothing did not answer, so Light set to work to watch it. All of a sudden he could not see it, or hear it, or touch it. 'Bravo!' cried Light; 'who is equal to that? I can be nothing myself; but I can't not be nothing.'" (*Loc. cit.*, p. 261.)

With all respect for the high opinion which Professor Giles cherishes for Han Fei Tze, saying that his "quotations make sense where the corresponding sentences in the Tao Teh King make nonsense," I must confess that the sense of the sentence, "I can't not be nothing," is too deep for me. It is at best a joke. But conceptions about sense and nonsense differ. Take, for instance, the following sentence—Lao-Tze says :

"The Tao produces oneness; oneness produces duality; duality produces trinity; trinity produces all things."

These ideas possess, in my opinion, in their literal significance good sense. Tao, i. e., the method of thinking, starts with unities: exhibiting dualities in contrasts or combinations, and finally produces trinities by a synthesis of two ideas. All thinking is done in these trinity relations, just as trigonometry calculates everything by measuring triangles. But Professor Giles, discovering in Mr. Balfour's translation a bad mistake in Latin grammar,¹ condemns Lao-Tze's proposition without further ado, saying (*loc. cit.*, p. 260):

¹ He makes the plural of "afflatus," "afflati"!

'The whole passage reminds me of a numerical proverb which I used to hear quoted by my great-grandmother :

One fool makes many,
And so the world do continue."

Chapter 41 contains a series of lines among which we read :

"Those enlightened by tao appear dark,
Those advanced by reason appear retreating."
"The greatest whiteness appears like shame,
The completest virtue appears insufficient."

And further on :

"The largest vessel is not yet completed,
The loudest voice is void of speech."

Obviously Lao-Tze means that the sage is not ostentatious and appears ignorant to the vulgar—an idea expressed repeatedly in the Tao Teh King, that genuine innocence is lacking in the sense of shame, that the largest vessel (the empire or the world) is never complete and the most powerful revelation of truth cannot be exhausted in words. Professor Giles translates one of these sentences as follows :

"He who is truly pure behaves as though he were sullied ; He who has virtue in abundance behaves as though it were not enough."

And as to the last line he says :

"The meaning is :
"A great thing takes long to complete,
A great sound is seldom heard."

The meaning is explained by a quotation from Han Fei Tze as follows :

"The king of Ch'u did nothing for the first three years of his reign. His Prime Minister then observed, 'There has been a bird sitting three years quite still, without wings, without flying, and without uttering a sound. How can your Majesty explain that ?' 'It was probably letting its wings grow,' replied the king, 'and occupied itself meanwhile in watching the people. When it does fly, it will soar to heaven. When it does cry, there will be consternation among men. Be not afraid. I understand you.' Six months afterwards the king took the reins of government into his own hands, and ruled with unparalleled success."

The meaning of Lao-Tze's sentences is profound, but Han Fei Tze's explanation appears to me too trivial to be helpful.

There are many more of Professor Giles's interpretations of passages quoted in a similar way from Lao-Tze which will scarcely recommend themselves to sinologists, and the arguments offered to prove his views are not convincing.

For instance :

The passage, "there is no sin greater than 欲 *yü*," i. e., desire (chapter 46), is accepted as genuine because quoted by Han Fei Tze; but Professor Giles insists that *yü* must be translated by "ambition," simply because "Han Fei Tzu instances the ambition of certain famous personages and so settles the point." Commenting upon another sentence (of chapter 71) Professor Giles says of Huai Nan Tze, his other great authority :

"He quotes the passage, probably as Lao Tzu uttered it, before the compiler of the Tao Tê King set to work to compress here, to expand there, never for the better but always for the worse, and then to serve up with padding of his own as the work of one of the mightiest teachers of old."

The passage which is commonly interpreted as Lao-Tze's complaints about the Pharisees of Confucianism (chapter 19), viz.:

"Abandon your saintliness,¹ discard your prudence, and the people will gain a hundredfold,"

is interpreted by Professor Giles on the basis of Huai Nan Tze's comments as follows :

"The real truth is that the Confucianists took up arms against a phrase, the exact import of which they misapprehended and were led to regard as an attack upon their own traditions. What Lao Tzu meant to say was that, with less wisdom and knowledge, the world would get on better. For instance, as Huai Nan Tzu explains the sentence, there would be no thieves, inasmuch as successful theft implies considerable mental power.

"The saying occurs in a slightly different form in Chuang Tzu. Some one asked Lao Tzu how the world would go along without government; to which Lao Tzu replied by showing how violence and disorder had always been conspicuous during the reigns even of the wisest emperors, and in spite of carefully-framed

¹ For reasons unknown to me, Professor Giles here, as in other passages, translates "wisdom" for "saintliness."

codes of laws. 'Therefore it has been said, *abandon wisdom and discard knowledge, and the empire will be at peace.*' "

Huai Nan Tze's explanation of Lao-Tze's philosophy, to make people too stupid for criminals, appears to me so trivial, so foolish, and at the same time so immoral, implying an obvious misconception of Lao-Tze's main contentions, that Professor Giles must pardon me for still adhering to the traditional interpretation of the passage.

Chapter 54 concludes with the phrase:

"How in the world do I know that it is so?" and Lao-Tze adds: "By this!"

So far as I know all commentators agree that Lao-Tze means to say "by this my tao (or Reason) which I am preaching to the world. I see no other possible explanation, and thus Mr. Chalmer translates "By this way"; Mr. Balfour, "By this method"; and Professor Giles adds (l. c., p. 267):

"In which case we are left stranded with a 'method' which comes from nothing and leads to nowhere."

This comment may be racy, even witty, but it is not fair.¹

Professor Giles translates the beginning of chapter 36 quoted by Han Fei Tze in these words:

"If you would contract, you must first expand. If you would weaken, you must first strengthen. If you would take, you must first give."

Must a general indeed first strengthen the enemy before he weakens him? Professor Giles's translation gives no sense and his construction is impossible. My own translation is more literal and comes nearer the truth:

"That which is about to contract has surely been [first] expanded. That which is about to weaken has surely been [first] strengthened. That which is about to fall has surely been [first] raised. That which is about to be despoiled has surely been [first] endowed."

In spite of his dependence upon Han Fei Tze and Huai Nan Tze, Professor Giles does not hesitate to appropriate for Lao-Tze

¹ Professor Giles is opposed to translating *tao* by reason, but it would lead me here too far to point out how groundless his objections are.

such sayings as betray an unusual depth of thought. Thus he says of the famous passage in chapter 49 :

"This chapter contains one very remarkable saying which I have no hesitation in attributing to Lao Tzu, although I have so far failed to discover it in any of his disciples' works."

Professor Giles translates the passage as follows :

"To the good I would be good. To the not-good I would also be good, in order to make them good."

In translating this passage, Professor Giles interprets 德 *teh* (virtue) to mean 得 *teh*, "to obtain," saying that this substitution "is common enough in archaic Chinese." The fact is (as I found out myself since the publication of my edition of the Tao Teh King) that one of the very best editions actually reads 得 *teh*, to obtain, for 德 *teh*, virtue. Adopting this reading, I propose to render the passage as follows :

"The good I meet with goodness, the bad I also meet with goodness. Thus I actualise goodness. The faithful I meet with faith, the faithless I also meet with faith, thus I actualise faith."

My version differs from that of Professor Giles and I think renders the sense more accurately. Supposing we had the word "to gooden" in English in the sense of "being good toward," a literal version would run thus: "The good ones I gooden; the not-good ones I also gooden, to obtain (viz., actualise) goodness." The translation of Professor Giles not only assumes that the pronoun "them," which is not in the text, must be understood, but also implies that thus Lao-Tze would "make" the bad good. Even if we grant that the word 善 *shan* could be twisted to mean "to make good," instead of "to gooden" (i. e., to be good oneself), the light which our knowledge of Lao-Tze's moral doctrines throws on this passage demands that we interpret the words as meaning that his purpose is to realise goodness first of all in himself, without bothering about the badness of others. The utilitarian turn which Professor Giles gives to the sentence does not appeal to me as the genuine sentiment of Lao-Tze.

I will not carry the discussion any further, although I feel

tempted to have my say on several other points made by Professor Giles and might also indicate points of agreement;¹ but I will only add that though I can accept neither Professor Giles's arguments nor his main conclusion, I have learned a great deal from his unquestionably racy and vigorous article on "The Remains of Lao Tzu." His positive tone and the apparent arbitrariness of his views do not disturb me. I am satisfied with the result that his articles and books have been helpful to me, and I will not on account of a radical disagreement as to our conclusions, withhold from him the gratitude I owe him for his labors, which are both instructive and suggestive.

I conclude by quoting from Professor Giles his comments on the gem of Lao-Tze's sayings:

報怨以德

"Requite hatred with goodness."²

which (as Professor Giles says) "has justly been held to confer upon its author the cachet of a great Teacher."

Professor Giles says:

"Those who, wanting in the logical faculty, have been foolish enough to say that the Golden Rule of Confucius ranks lower than the Golden Rule of Christ, have here had to take their shoes from off their feet and admit that they are upon holy ground. Nevertheless, Dr. Legge, the greatest offender of all on the Golden Rule question, because the most competent in other respects, cannot resist flinging one little pebble at Lao Tzu's gigantic monolith among aphorisms: 'There hardly belongs to it a moral character.'

"But we may safely leave this one of Lao Tzu's sayings to rest upon its own merits."

* * *

Professor Giles has dug out from the writings of Lao-Tze's disciples some agrapha which are worth mentioning.

¹ When I translated the Tao Teh King, I had not seen Professor Giles's article, and it is a satisfaction to me to find that my translation essentially agrees with his versions as against others in passages quoted by him from chapters 5, 7, 13, 27, 29, 33, 38, 63, 64, 65 and 78.

² Professor Giles translates: "Recompense injury with kindness."

Han Fei Tze quotes from Lao-Tze this sentence :

白圭之行堤也塞其穴丈人之慎火也塗其隙

which means :

"Pao Kuei avoided floods by stopping the cracks in his dike; Chang-jen guarded against fire by plastering up the fissures [of his stove]." ¹

The quotation may be a genuine agraphon of Lao-Tze, a saying not written down by himself but preserved by oral tradition, until Han Fei Tze cited it. But it may not be; for we must remember that Lao-Tze never mentions names in the Tao Teh King.

The same author tells a story of little significance and adorns it with this saying of Lao Tze :

聖人蚤從事

"The wise man takes time by the forelock."²

Another sentence which occurs in a modified form in the Tao Teh King (chapter 27) is quoted by Huai Nan Tze thus :

不善人善人之資

"Do not value the man, value the abilities."

The story which Huai Nan Tze tells to illustrate the meaning of the sentence, though lacking in superiority, is somewhat more interesting than other stories of his, which therefore are left unquoted. Professor Giles condenses it in these words :

"Huai Nan Tzu says, a certain general of the Ch'u State was fond of surrounding himself with men of ability, and once even went so far as to engage a man who represented himself as a master-thief. His retainers were aghast; but shortly afterwards their State was attacked by the Ch'i State, and then, when fortune was adverse and all was on the point of being lost, the master-thief begged to be allowed to try his skill. He went by night into the enemy's camp, and stole their general's bed-curtain. This was returned next morning with a message that it had been found by one of the soldiers who was gathering fuel. The same night our master-thief stole the general's pillow, which was restored with a similar message; and the following night he stole the long pin used to secure the hair. 'Good

¹ Since I make these quotations from Professor Giles, I feel in duty bound to quote the translations in his own words.

² Professor Giles's translation is idiomatic or rather Shakespearean language. Literally the sentence reads: "The saintly man in [the right] time attends to [his] business."

heavens!' cried the general at a council of war, 'they will have my head next. Upon which the army of the Ch'i State was withdrawn.'

We conclude our article with the quotation of a noble sentiment which is as fit a subject for a sermon to-day as it was in the days of Lao-Tze. It is recorded by Huai Nan Tze, and is related by Professor Giles as follows:

"When a certain ruler was besieging an enemy's town, a large part of the wall fell down; whereupon the former gave orders to beat a retreat at once. 'For,' said he in reply to the remonstrances of his officers, 'a gentleman never hits a man who is down' 君子不迫人於險¹ 'Let them rebuild their wall, and then we will renew the attack.' This noble behavior so delighted the enemy that they tendered allegiance on the spot. Truly the feudal age of China was not wanting in lessons of magnanimity and heroism."

How much better would Western diplomats and generals have succeeded in their dealings with China if they had known more about Chinese literature, Chinese religion, and Chinese ideals of gentlemanly behavior!

EDITOR.

¹ Literally: "The superior man not threatens the man in [a state of being] down."